



3-27-1897

## Letter to W. P. Hunnicutt (#3)

Sheldon Jackson

Department of the Interior,  
**Bureau of Education,**

ALASKA DIVISION,

Washington, D. C., March 27, 1897.

Mr. W. P. Hunnicutt,  
Whittier, California.

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 19th instant is received. Since writing you before I have found that I had an extra copy of Corwin's reports, which I could loan you. One copy is for the year 1884, the other for 1885. The one for 1885 has the larger amount of information concerning the Kotzebue Sound region, although that for 1884 has also a good deal on the subject. I am not certain which copy, whether 1884 or 1885 was sent to you? The other copy was sent to Mr. Chas. Tebbetts, Pasadena, Cal. My plan is for you to exchange copies and send them around among the officers of your yearly meeting, after which they are to be mailed back to the Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C., with the penalty slips which we forwarded to you. I think in those volumes you will find an answer to nearly all your questions. I will, however, give a running answer to such of them as I can:-

1. The buildings are on the seashore; they can be protected by hills, if they are on the rivers inland, by the groves.
2. Kotzebue Sound has been passed by, because there is no village of any size directly on the seacoast; the population being

scattered along the great rivers that empty into the Sound.

3. I do not know the direction of the worst storms.

4. The sub-soil is always frozen.

5. There could be cemented cellars but they would be costly.

6. I think there is timber enough up the rivers to justify a saw-mill. But I would not start with that until after you know more about the country.

7. Reindeer cannot be sent there this present year, but if we succeed in buying one thousand head during the year in Siberia we can send a herd next year.

8. I would expect the man to take charge of the outside work, his wife to look after the household, one of the unmarried ladies in the school room and the other general assistant.

9. The size and character of the buildings would largely be determined by the amount of money that you can afford to expend. I would suggest the erection of log houses with tongue and grooved flooring and tongue and grooved ceiling for the top and sides of the room. I would place tarred paper behind all the ceiling, also a double floor first of rough boards, second tarred paper, then third the usual flooring. I would make rather a flat roof with two layers of boards breaking joints running up and down and a batten over the crack of the upper layer. I would build a side wall <sup>of sod</sup> around the entire house and cover the roof with the same as a protection against cold. Also have double sash windows and double outside doors.

10 There should be a chimney and a stove for every living room; I would send one coal stove and six tons of anthracite to be a reserved fuel in case wood was not found as plenty as I think it is.

11. They will need a good kit of ordinary carpenter's tools: shovels, pick-axes, hoes. *+ a Grind Stone.*

12. I think vegetables will have to be raised in hotbeds, but lettuce, beets, radishes, turnips, raised in a hot-bed will be a welcome addition to their diet.

13. Provisions you can judge for yourself. Everything will be required to be taken *from San Francisco* except fresh fish, which part of the year can be had in the waters adjacent to their home.

14. They will need to take good warm flannel underclothing; for outer clothing they can do as the natives do, dress in skins, which are very cheap.

15. I presume wind-mills could be used for power but not water.

16. Fresh water cannot be had in winter except by melting snow or ice.

17. I do not know how much rain or snow falls.

18. The Weather Office will furnish simple instruments for observations like the temperature, barometer, force and direction of the wind.

19. There will be no overland mail in winter except the Missionaries send out such by some passing party of Eskimo going to a trade store at St. Michael.

20. I will not be able to go with the missionaries this year but either myself or assistant, Mr. Hamilton, will visit them annually hereafter.

21. They need kerosene oil for light.

22. A store can be started the first year.

23. A vessel leaves San Francisco the last of May. Write to Henry R. Wood, # 8 Steuart Street, San Francisco; it will take nearly a month from San Francisco to Kotzebue Sound. Freight is \$10 a ton, passage \$75 a person.

24. I cannot say what the expense of keeping a mission would be for two years; the habits and wants of different persons are so very different that it is impossible to tell. By corresponding with Rev. Robt. <sup>de</sup> Schweintz, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, you can get the expense of <sup>the Moravian</sup> their missionaries, which will give you a good idea of the expense of yours. It will be impossible to get the Government to furnish transportation because our fund is so small that it is all occupied. The more I think of your plans the more I am disposed to advise you not to send the ladies up this season but to take the man who is to go permanently and send with him a good carpenter and allround man; they can be landed on the Sound and live for a while in a tent. The difficulty of taking the ladies along is that you do not know where you want to settle. When the party get there they will have to visit different parts of the Coast and go up the rivers, visit the villages and determine where is the best place to make a permanent location. This will consume the

entire fall and they may be compelled during the coming winter to make a dugout in the side of a hill. Of course you do not want to put up permanent buildings and then when you come to know the country better find that you have made a mistake <sup>in the location</sup>. It will be a great deal wiser and cheaper to put two men in there the present season and let them have a year to determine upon the location. Then next year send in the women, the supplies and the buildings. This was the plan pursued by the Moravians in locating their mission upon the Koskokwin. I fear if the whole party go in this summer that they would suffer a good deal next winter. Miss Hunnicutt can continue as teacher for another year at Douglas Island.

Please show this letter to those associated with you.

Very respectfully yours,

*Sheldon Jackson*

*Enclosure*